

# MODEL OF DEMOCRACY IN INDONESIA

Prof. Dr. Dede Rosada, MA  
UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta

**Abstract - Indonesia, the largest Muslim country, experiences a unique democracy. Not only Indonesia becomes the G-20 state member but also performs an increasing economy from 4.9% in 2015 to 5.2% in 2017. Indonesia after the New Order is confident in managing democracy. Direct elections and decentralization allow local leaders to represent their community. This essay argues that stable economy and mature democracy will strengthen Indonesian position as a great power both in regional and in international level.**

**Keywords : Indonesia, Consolidated Democracy**

## I. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia has implemented three models of democracy. They are constitutional or liberal democracy, guided democracy and democracy *Pancasila*. Thus, what kind of democracy is implemented in Indonesia today, that is the focus of the paper. Indonesia was proclaimed as the independence country on the five basic principles religiosity, humanity, unity, democracy and social justice. Since the early of establishment, Indonesia had a great vision to be a democratic country but it was contradictory to the common theory, which democracy is never compatible with religiosity. Democracy requires secularization because of “the basic right of citizenship to be exercised under the condition of freedom, equality, transparency, and responsibility, with due respect for plurality of views, and in the interest of the polity” [1]. Thus, the government should not taking care of the religious life of the society, because looking at the history of religions, bishops and caliphate formally have admitted that they are the God’s representative on earth. So they have the authority to legalize their mind on behalf of God. Therefore, the authority is being under their hands, not belong to the society. Accordingly, the modern state marginalizes the religion for being a personal affair, and even, democracy requires civil society to develop their nation as they need and neglect the authority of God.

Correspondingly, John L Esposito states, that the relationship between Islam and democracy is strongly debatable among the people who identify the Islamic resurgence in the late twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first. Some of these Islamists believe that democracy is a foreign concept that has been promoted by Westernizers and secular reformers upon Muslim societies. They often argue that the concept of popular sovereignty denies the fundamental Islamic affirmation of the

God’ sovereignty as it is considered a form of idolatry. But, Many prominent Islamic intellectuals and groups, however, argue that Islam and democracy are compatible. Some extend the argument to affirm that under the conditions of the contemporary world, democracy can be considered as a requirement of Islam. In these discussions, Muslim scholars bring historically important concepts from within the Islamic tradition together with the basic concepts of democracy as understood in the modern world [2].

Based on the basic principles that the sovereignty belongs to all citizens, every five years, the people of Indonesia elect their representatives in parliament and the council of regional representative, and also they elect president and vice president. The members of the parliament are elected to represent and express the people aspirations, to achieve main goals of the nation, social welfare, justice and prosperity; which are pursued as a long term programs for five years. For short term program, their responsibilities are to construct the nation vision, mission, and to formulate some bills, to maintain the peaceful living of the citizens.

## II. THE CRUCIAL EXPERIENCES OF INDONESIAN DEMOCRACY

Indonesia was founded as a democratic country as was asserted in five principles of Pancasila pillar number four, that is “democracy which is led by the wisdom of representative people deliberation“. The founding fathers of the country were aware that the people of Indonesia were heterogeneous, whether in ethnic background, culture or religiosity, and they will have some different aspirations to develop. Therefore, the country should be managed together by optimizing participation. Nevertheless, the country will be fallen to conflicts, riots, civil war, and will always busied by securing society, guarding the community against criminal disturbance. The only way to promote and maintain harmonious relationship, cohesiveness and mutual trust between all difference communities is participation and democracy.

Democracy is the political system that requires well educated society, because democracy as Abraham Lincoln asserted, is “government of the people, by the people, and for the people” [3]. Or in another way it can be narrated, that democracy is a government comes from the people, it is exercised

by the people, and for the people own interest. For those reasons, everyone is requested to understand where the country is going to, and what are the vision and mission of the country, the programs of the government to be achieved; whether it is compatible with the people' interest or not. When democracy is applied amongst non educated society, it will be some odd games happen on the political stage on behalf of democracy. That is why, in academic discourse it is often stigmatized as pseudo democracy. Executive leaders being Primus Inter pares as the only intellectual group leading the country. Hence, it commonly happens that in the transition of democracy, where the executive initiated regulation, regulating and operating regulation, pretending the institution of democracy.

Based on the historical evidence, struggling for democracy has been done since the early independence. Nevertheless, as it was stated by Ikrar Nusa Bhakti, all efforts for democratization in political process were failed. First, Indonesia tried to attempt at parliamentary democracy (1949-1957) which led to the transition from parliamentary democracy to guided democracy (1957-1959), in which President Sukarno established the so called *Zaken* or Functional Cabinet, a business cabinet which consisted of members of political parties, economists and the military. Second, there was another attempt at 'Guided Democracy' under President Sukarno (1959-1965). The third and longest period was that of 'Pancasila Democracy' under President Suharto from March 1966 to May 1998 [4]. The first experience was Parliamentary democracy, where civilians played a dominant role and political parties were of great importance [4]. But it was ended by Soekarno and the Army year 1957, and was substituted by guided democracy. The power moved from the people to the government. Guided democracy was begun year 1959 until 1965, however, it cannot restore the economical life of Indonesia, and even the situation was dire, the production had slowed dramatically, hyperinflation more than 600 percent, it crippled the country. The situation was ended by coup d'etat at 11 of March 1966 by the Army force, and promoted Soeharto to come to power at presidential position.

Soeharto also started his position by empowering democracy, and introduced Pancasila Democracy, or democracy that was based on five principles of Pancasila. As it was stipulated in pillar number four of five pillars, that Indonesia was established based on democracy that is led by a wisdom of the deliberation of the representative members. Democracy is one of five principles, but it was asserted that the model of expected democracy is mandatory democracy to the representative members of the people. For this

purpose, Soeharto and the Army force created a functional party or Golongan Karya (Golkar) as a tool for army to enter political institution. It was inspired by a concern of army force to the late political situation that communist party always intervened the government. For those reasons, some top army leaders initiated to develop joint secretariat together with other professional organization to guard government. It was started year 1964 and was led by Brigadier General Djuhartono as the first leader of Golkar, and then succeeded by Mayor General Suprpto that he was elected in the first national summit year 1965 [5]. Golkar participated in the general election year 1971, and won the election by 62. 80% [6].

Along with it, Soeharto also used military doctrine "double function of army, as the combat troops and social leaders". It was introduced for the first time by AH Nasution in front of Military Academy Students year 1958, and re-stipulated in the military leaders meeting year 1960 in Porong [7]. Such decision had implied distribution of military force personnels in a lot of civilian positions, such as regent, governor, member of parliament, and even director general or secretary general in a lot of departments. The military management system based on command, slowly reduced the culture of democracy in the government management, and finally, Nusa Bhakti said that new order era surely moved to the dictatorship [4].

Pancasila Democracy failed as two previous exercises, liberal and guided democracy. The point of failure was the involvement of military force in a lot of civil servant positions, as the implication of a military double function doctrine. Meanwhile, managerial style of military was top down command, while democracy required participation based on equality. Democracy also legalizes critics from outside governments such as non-government organization, journalism, and also from within organization it self. Finally, the period of Pancasila democracy was ended by a lot of corruption as it less of controls, economy slowly decline, which brought to the collapse in 1997. However, the collapse was followed by the reform era as an arising of new consolidated democracy.

### III. NEW CONSOLIDATED DEMOCRACY

The above mentioned phenomena have indicated that long lasting exercised of democracy in Indonesia was ended with failure. But anyhow, Indonesia citizens still believe that democratization will effectively bring them to an ideal nation, justice, and prosperity for whole citizens. Therefore, reform movement in 1998 was motivated by the spirit for developing the most ideal democracy for Indonesia. What is

democracy? Democracy is a set of ideas and principles about freedom, but it also consists of practices and procedures that have been molded through a long, often tortuous history. Democracy is the institutionalization of freedom [8]. In the end, people living in a democratic society must serve as the ultimate guardians of their freedom and must forge their path toward Human Rights: inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice, and peace in the world.

Another principle of Pancasila democracy, as it was stated by Mohammad Hatta and was cited by Agustam, is that democracy based on kinship, mutual assistance of the people to achieve social welfare, religious consciousness, based on truth, love and noble character within a frame of Indonesian personality [9]. Hatta, emphasized the importance of togetherness, love, and harmonious life between all Indonesian citizens, even if the people have different background of ethnicities, culture, and beliefs. Similarly, Yudi Latif said that Pancasila democracy has a noble teaching that individual freedom is not absolute, but must be harmonized with social responsibility, and even the goals of the universality of democracy are synthesized with the purposes of the people, which is always imbued by the spirit of brotherhood, avoiding domination of majority and always respecting the right of minority [10].

In addition, Pancasila democracy has always implemented within religious consciousness. It means, that all Indonesian citizens are protected by some regulations such as presidential decree, ministerial decree, and joint decree between related ministries, to embrace a certain religion as their belief, and to implement religious rituals or traditions along their life. Then, all bills, government regulations, presidential decrees and local regulations are imbued by the spirit of the people benefits as part of religious missions. The government comes in a lot of religious lives of the people by providing a number of budgets to help facilitating religious activities. Each religion has its doctrine, jurisprudence and ritual conduct that is different one to another. Within the unity in diversity framework, Indonesia regulates some kinds of mutual respect, mutual trust, and mutual understanding to maintain the harmonious life and to develop the social stability to ensure the government administration service, business activities, and all professional works for achieving main goals of the nation, justice, prosperous and social welfare.

Religious consciousness is not a barrier to democracy. Precisely, religious doctrine, values and traditions set up the people's behavior, the way of thinking to develop the nation whether in ideology, politic, economy, social and culture, and to promote the capacity of the country in enhancing national resilience. By those reasons, the position of the religiosity as the first pillar of five pillars of Pancasila is fundamental because religious values spiritualize all professional and social behavior of the people, and as a matter of fact, religious consciousness is always being the key factor for succeeding social and professional networking between the different religious followers. The people of Indonesia is one community as the Indonesian without considering the difference of the religions, ethnics and cultures. Therefore, Pancasila democracy is one of democracy system that is imbued with religious values. And, religion never interferes the substance of democracy concept, it develops by its nature, whereas religious values influence the people behavior in implementing democracy, and the spirit of all kind of regulations.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Pancasila Democracy that has a religious pillar does not impede democracy. It can be implemented in almost all principles, and religious doctrines which influences the morality of democracy, whether in persuading the people to participate in election, to elect a certain person for being a member of representative body in the parliament, or to elect president and vice president. Also, the religious values influence the morality in the process of governing the people, control the government and construct the regulations. Religion can control the people's behavior in politic, profession or government. Religion never pretends to reformulate democracy system exclusively. It appreciates and accommodates the running system that compatible with the Islamic spirit.

The uniqueness of Pancasila democracy is the appreciation to the freedom of the people in the basis of kinship, mutual assistance of the people to achieve social welfare, religious consciousness, based on truth, love and Noble character within a frame of Indonesian personality. Religious consciousness underpins all democratic behaviors, in the politic, government and also professional works. All democracy institutions are developed and maintained in implementing all democracy processes without pretending for rethinking the ancient historical experience that has happened amongst some Islamic countries.

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